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Expression Analysis of Japanese Comic Characters in the *Seinen Genre*

(Musashi Cries Characters in the Japanese Comic Vagabond)

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ABSTRACT

Manga utilizes character expressions to convey complex emotional narratives. This is especially true when text is limited or omitted, such as scenes in Takehiko Inoue's Vagabond manga. Miyamoto Musashi, the strong and masculine main character, has several expressions of holding back tears. Reflecting emotions are depicted through facial elements such as forehead, eyebrows and eyes. The research aims to analyze the character of Musashi holding back tears in volume 32. The method used consists of three, namely analysis of shading techniques, analysis of facial expressions and gesture analysis. Data collection through non-participant observation and literature study. The result is that the combination of visual techniques, facial expressions, and body gestures is able to bring to life the character's inner emotions in a strong and expressive manner. This research is useful in revealing the role of visual elements in strengthening emotional narratives and deepening characterization, as well as making a significant contribution to the study of visual works and comic media.

Keywords: Character, Comic, Emotion, Expression, Visual

INTRODUCTION

Comics have long existed as a form of visual communication by combining elements of images and text to convey stories. In this case, images and illustrations play an important role as nonverbal messaging elements, serving as a gateway to invite readers to engage in the story

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(Soedarso, 2015). With their visual advantages, comics are able to effectively express emotions, ideas and messages, making them a flexible medium for various communication purposes. This makes comics a popular medium in various cultures, including Japan, which is known as one of the centers of the world's comics industry. In Japan, *manga* has developed into an important part of popular culture, with a variety of themes and styles that appeal to readers around the world.

As one of the iconic Japanese *manga*, *Vagabond* is the work of Takehiko Inoue, who inspired the story of Eiji Yoshikawa's novel *Musashi*. Interestingly, the manga is not entirely faithful to the original novel, as there are some differences (Yamashita 2005). The *manga* was first serialized in the *seinen manga* magazine *Morning*, published by *Kodansha*, on September 23, 1998. Shortly after, on March 23, 1999, the first *volume* was released and immediately received rave reviews. *Vagabond* won numerous prestigious awards, including the *Kodansha Manga Award* in 2000 and *the Tezuka Osamu Cultural Prize* in 2002. Its popularity is reflected in its total sales of more than 22 million copies worldwide (Riantrisnanto, 2014). The *manga* tells the life journey of Miyamoto Musashi, a legendary samurai from Japan in the 16th century. *Vagabond* belongs to the *seinen genre*, which is known for its more complex and mature stories, aimed at adult readers. *Vagabond*'s strength lies not only in its in-depth storyline, but also in its striking visual style. Takehiko Inoue adopts a realist and naturalist style. In depicting the characters, Inoue creates a detailed depiction of each character, both in body anatomy, gestures, facial expressions, and clothing textures, thus creating a realistic impression that almost resembles traditional art illustrations. This is different from the typical style of *manga* depiction, which often features characters with big eyes, small faces, slender bodies, and long legs (Vidi *et al.,* 2024).

In addition, visual elements such as shadows, lighting, and panel composition also strengthen the naturalistic impression in *Vagabond*. *Vagabond* comic uses light-dark contrasts to create a dramatic atmosphere and bring out the characters' deep emotions. The backgrounds in the comic

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are drawn in great detail, reflecting the natural environment of feudal Japan, such as forests, mountains, buildings, and small villages. These images not only provide a strong reflection of the era, but also help readers delve deeper into the world of *Vagabond*.

The battles in this comic are depicted with a more subtle and realistic approach, avoiding the exaggerated visual effects often found in action *manga*. This style makes each scene feel more emotional and reflects the tension felt by each character. One of the other major strengths of *Vagabond* also lies in the detailed and in-depth visualization of expressions, especially for the main character, Miyamoto Musashi. Inoue manages to capture the complexity of Musashi's emotions, ranging from anger, ambition, anxiety, sadness, to the inner battle he is experiencing. These details make the reader not only see Musashi as a legendary samurai, but also as a human being with deep layers of emotions.

Of the approximately 1,000 expressions found throughout the *Vagabond* series, there is one very unique panel in volume 32, where Miyamoto Musashi is depicted holding back tears with his mouth covered by his arms. This expression only appears in *volume* 32 and is not found in any other panel in the story, especially from *volumes* 1 to 37. Most of Musashi's expressions in this series tend to depict a strong, tough, and dominant character. The uniqueness of this expression of holding back tears lies in its contrast with the image of Musashi as a masculine and manly man. The scene creates a visualization of Musashi that presents an interesting contradiction, while also showing his human side that is rarely seen. This detail reveals that behind the tough and strong nature that dominates Musashi's character lies a vulnerability and deep emotion that makes him more complex and real as a human being. The expression of holding back tears is visualized by Inoue without the use of text, allowing the character's emotions to be fully conveyed visually through the details of the illustration.

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Miyamoto Musashi *Volume* 32

Source: Inoue (2010)

The image above shows Musashi holding back tears in *volume* 32, which is the focus of this research, specifically on the deep emotional moments displayed in *volume* 32. The visualization of expressions in *Vagabond* shows how visual design elements can strengthen the narrative of the story. Musashi's facial expressions while holding back tears are a reflection of his deepest feelings. This contrast opens up the opportunity to analyze how Takehiko Inoue visualizes the expression of sadness in Musashi, who is usually portrayed as full of fighting power and resilience. Through detailed illustrations without the use of text, Inoue is able to visually convey the complexity of emotions. The depiction of expressions in comics is important because it is the main medium for conveying emotional narratives, especially when text is limited or even eliminated. Facial expressions allow readers to feel a connection with the characters, strengthening emotional involvement in the story. In addition, effective depictions of expressions can convey nuances of feeling that cannot be fully explained through dialog or narration alone.

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This depiction shows how a visual approach can be used to convey complex emotional narratives, while proving the important role of visual elements in enriching characters and deepening the reader's experience of the story. The depiction of these expressions not only enriches Musashi as a person, but also adds emotional depth to the overall narrative of *Vagabond*. Inoue's visual elements play an important role in communicating these emotional aspects, making *Vagabond* a *manga* work that combines visual aesthetics and emotional narrative.

METHOD

The method used in this research uses 3 methods, namely the 1st using the method of analyzing shading techniques using Widyokusumo's Latitude theory, namely unidirectional shading technique (hatching), cross hatching technique (cross hatching), circle shading technique (circulism), free shading technique (random line), contour shading technique (contour line), and point shading technique (stippling) (Widyokusumo, 2014), to find out the shading technique used. The 2nd method uses facial expression analysis using the *Facial Expression* theory by Gary Faigin. This method focuses on identifying and analyzing the characters' facial expressions to illustrate the emotions contained in the *Vagabond* comic panel *volume* 32, especially in the image of Miyamoto Musashi holding back tears, created by Inoue. Gary Faigin, in his book *The Artist's Complete Guide to Facial Expression* (1990), states that *"Facial expression is the window to the soul."* This statement emphasizes that facial expressions are a direct reflection of the feelings or emotions a person is experiencing. This method is used with the aim of explaining how the facial expressions depicted by Inoue on the Musashi character in the *Vagabond* comic *volume* 32 by analyzing the visualization of facial elements. According to Mataram (2017), the depiction of expressions and gestures does not always have consistency because both can be influenced by the visualization of certain situations and can be expressed separately from the emotions felt by the character. Gestures have a more silhouette form in describing the position of the body, compared to facial expressions that show more surface (McCloud, 2007), in

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analyzing gestures using Kimon Nicolaides' theory, objects have their own gestures, not just figures, to feel the essence of the object / figure. According to Nicolaides (1969), gesture in a picture is not what the object looks like, not even what the picture is, but what it is doing. gesture is a dynamic action, moving and not static, gesture is movement in space. Gesture is the movement of the object as perceived by the image maker. The use of this theory for gesture analysis is to find out the feeling of the Musashi figure from its depiction, to strengthen the expression of the object's movement recorded in the gesture.

Data collection techniques are carried out through non-participant observation, where the researcher only acts as an observer without exerting influence on the object under study (Sutopo, 2006). In this case, observations were made on the Vagabond comic panel *volume* 32 which displays Musashi's facial expression while holding back tears. In addition, this research also utilizes literature study as a written data source through reading, analyzing, and reviewing related literature to strengthen the findings. The observation technique is used to collect data from Vagabond volume 32 comics, especially on panels depicting Musashi's facial expressions. The steps in using the *Facial Expression* method include:

1. Data collection: Collecting visual data from comic panels and supporting literature through observation and literature study.
2. Facial expression analysis: Describe and analyze the visual elements on the panel including faces, gestures, and other supporting visual elements that reflect the emotions or feelings of the character Musashi in *Vagabond* comic *volume* 32, through Gary Faigin's *Facial Expression* method.

Compile the analysis results found from the analysis table as research conclusions.

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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Comics are often thought of as light entertainment, but many experts argue that comics are more than just a visual medium**.** *Vagabond* is a clear example of an illustrated work of fiction that tells the story of life through the eyes of a samurai who goes on to live his life as a free ronin. Samurai who lost their lord, or *daimyo*, are often referred to as ronin. The term ronin specifically refers to samurai without a master, who in some cases also become hitmen to survive (Siswantara *et al*., 2021). The lives of these ronin depict conflicts that also reflect the values embedded in the Japanese ethos. If the cowboy symbolizes the American ethos, then the samurai warrior symbolizes the Japanese ethos (Schodt, 1986).

Based on stories from the Edo era, *Vagabond* comics present a story full of realistic social and spiritual themes, as well as deep historical elements. Modern comics tend to be commercially oriented and often present fictitious stories, while comics of the past were more about realistic social and spiritual life themes and historical elements (Gumilang, 2017). *Vagabond*, created by Takehiko Inoue, adapts a story from Eiji Yoshikawa's novel *Musashi*, combining historical elements with the life of the main character Miyamoto Musashi. Although it adapts the story from Eiji Yoshikawa's novel *Musashi*, it is better to call this story an original story created by Takehiko Inoue **(**Andrássy, 2014). In Indonesia, *Vagabond* comics were released up to 37 *volumes*, starting from its publication in 2005 by Level Komik until its last release in 2015 by PT Elex Media Komputindo. However, the storytelling of this comic has not been completed because Takehiko Inoue decided to take a hiatus.

In the 37 *volumes of Vagabond* comics, there are approximately 1,000 expressions of Miyamoto Musashi depicted in detail by Inoue. Overall, Musashi's character is presented with clarity and life, supported by Inoue's signature realist visual style. The character's life is built through several important elements, such as character design, facial expressions, and body *gestures* (McCloud, 2007). One of the most interesting expressions among the 1,000 expressions is when Musashi holds back tears, which is visible and only found in one panel in *volume* 32.

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The picture in *volume* 32 shows Miyamoto Musashi holding back tears. The contributing factor to Musashi's tears is told in *volume* 32 as Musashi contemplates a word of "pleasure" from his enemy, Itto Ittosai. The word "pleasure" here refers to the meaning of "when we decide to be on the path of the sword, it has nothing to do with right or wrong, only pleasure". Musashi, upon reflecting on the word, remembered all the lives he had ended on his journey as a samurai. This triggers a deep sense of regret, causing tears to flow from his eyes. This panel of holding back tears visually captures the intensity of his emotions strongly, showing Musashi's inner conflict and giving depth to his character, as well as how Takehiko Inoue is able to package this visualization of holding back tears through shading techniques, Musashi's expressions and gestures with his distinctive drawing style. The analysis of the panel images in *volume* 32 that include shading techniques, expressions and gestures will be presented in tables 1, 2 and 3 below. Analysis of shading techniques in table 1, using the theory of Lintang Widyokusumo, namely unidirectional shading techniques (hatching), cross hatching techniques (cross hatching), circular shading techniques (circulism), free shading techniques (random line), contour shading techniques (contour line), and point shading techniques (stippling) (Widyokusumo, 2014), The importance of shading techniques consisting of repetitive and stacked lines in the image can represent messages, each type of line has a different role (Apriyanto, 2015 in Prayoga 2020). Shading forms volume, creates texture, gives a light dark effect, and determines the direction of light (Hariadi, 2017 in Prayoga 2020).

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Table 1: Analysis of Panel and Shading Techniques in *Vagabond* Comic *Volume* 32.

Elements	Image of *Vagabond Volume* 32	Explanation
Panel	 Image of Miyamoto Musashi Sobbing in *Volume* 32 Source: Inoue (2010)	● The image above is one of the panels from *volume 32* that shows Musashi in an emotional moment of tears with his hands covering most of his face. This panel does not feature any word balloons or other text. ● This visual depicts Musashi's reflection on the meaning of the word "pleasure" and remembers his actions that took the lives of others. ● This panel is given a white background, which serves to accentuate the focus on Musashi as the main subject. ● The use of a white background also emphasizes the impression of solitude and inner conflict felt by Musashi. ● The lighting in the panel is shown through the hair color setting on the top of the head. ● The hair is not completely shaded black, but white is left to depict the reflection of light, which gives a realistic effect. ● Lighting and shadows were used to accentuate the folds of the clothes and the contours of the face. ● The placement of the characters on the left side of the panel creates an empty space on the right, providing visual balance. ● The *bust-up* point of view serves to intensely capture emotions and body gestures, strengthening the conveyance of feelings in this scene.
Shading Technique	 Shading Pattern Picture Source: Inoue (2010)	● Takehiko Inoue uses a traditional drawing method with a black ink brush ● Dominant shading techniques include: *Hatching:* A method of shading with unidirectional strokes to produce dark gradations (Prayoga, 2020). *Cross-hatching:* A technique where lines are opposite and overlapped, creating shadow effects and dark-light contrasts (Pangestu et al., 2022). ● This shading technique gives a dramatic impression that supports the emotional atmosphere depicted in the panel

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Besides the paneling and shading techniques used by Inoue in volume 32, the most striking aspect is the facial expression of the character Miyamoto Musashi, who is depicted as holding back tears. This expression accentuates the nuances of anxiety, sadness, and deep emotional distress. In comics, facial expressions play an important role as a visual element that can build an emotional connection with the reader. Strong and vivid expressions allow the character's emotions to be conveyed effectively through the reader's sense of sight (IRM, 2013).

Facial expressions are also an essential form of non-verbal communication in visually conveying a character's emotions. It serves to provoke empathy in the reader and deepen the emotional connection with the character (McCloud, 2007). In this analysis, Musashi*'s* facial expressions are analyzed using the *Facial Expression* theory by Gary Faigin, as described in his book *The Artist's Complete Guide to Facial Expression* (1990). Table 2 shows how the facial elements reflect Musashi's emotions in the scene.

Furthermore, the depiction of body gestures also provides strong information about the emotions felt by the character to the reader. Both body gestures and expressions are body language depicted in this comic. The difference between the depiction of expressions and gestures does not always have consistency because both can be influenced by the visualization of certain situations and can be expressed separately from the emotions felt by the character (Mataram, 2017). Gestures are more silhouetted in depicting the position of the body, compared to facial expressions which are more surface-based (McCloud, 2007). This makes gestures more flexible to convey contextual meaning according to the story. In addition, the variety of body gestures can also strengthen the interpretation of more complex emotions. Gesture analysis of Musashi figure drawing uses Kimon Nicolaides' theory, according to which gesture is how the artist feels the movement of the object, in this case the creator of Musashi figure drawing feels the essence of the object through dynamic movement. Gesture in the picture is not what the object looks like, not even what the picture is, but what it is doing. gesture is a dynamic action, moving and not static, gesture is movement in space. gesture is the movement of the object that is felt by the

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creator of the picture (Nicolaides, 1969). Gesture analysis is done to find the feeling of the Musashi figure from its depiction and to strengthen the expression movement recorded in the gesture, the analysis is done in table 3.

In the panel of *Vagabond volume* 32, Inoue managed to present a different side of Musashi that was rarely highlighted before. Musashi has been known as a masculine, tough figure, who does not hesitate to take the lives of his opponents, visualized in an emotional moment while holding back tears. His expressions and gestures convey deep emotion, reflecting the shock and realization of his actions. Inoue depicts visual elements in great detail, including facial expressions and gestures, as symbols of Musashi's vulnerability. Although his face is partially covered by his arms, the movement of his bent eyebrows, wide-open eyes with a blank stare, and the visualization of tears reinforce the emotion he is feeling. Faigin (1990) explains that the upper head, such as the eyebrows, eyes, and forehead, are important areas of the face for conveying forms of emotion. In this panel, Inoue's lines and shading strongly emphasize these expressions, even though only part of Musashi's face is visible.

In addition, the hatching and cross-hatching shading techniques used by Inoue also reinforce the dramatic feel of this panel. The details in the hair, kimono outfit, and facial contours add visual depth, while the blank background panel gives full focus to Musashi, creating a deeper emotional intensity. This depiction reveals the human side behind Musashi's powerful image. Inoue carefully displays that behind the physical strength of a swordsman lies a deep emotional vulnerability. This reinforces the narrative that even seemingly invincible characters have weaknesses that can make them more relatable to readers. In the world of manga, characters are often designed to show a mix of strengths and weaknesses, in order to build an emotional connection with readers (Wegrzyn et al., 2017). As described by Wulansuci (2010), each character reflects good and bad, as well as strengths and weaknesses that are balanced in characterization.

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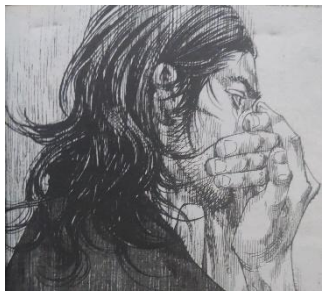
Table 2: Expression Analysis of Miyamoto Musashi *Vagabond Volume* 32

Description	*Vagabond Volume* 32	Gary Fiagin	Explanation
Head Shape	 Drawing of Musashi's Head Shape (side) Source: Inoue (2010)	 Female Head Shape Picture (side) Source: Faigin (1990)	● When viewed from the side, the relationship between the skull and the face is very clear, even though half of Musashi's face is covered by his arms. This is followed by the shape of the hair that follows the contours of the skull. Straight hair tends to adhere to the shape of the skull (Faigin, 1990). In the drawing of Musashi (figure 4), this can be clearly seen, where the hairline falling straight down emphasizes the contour of the skull at the back of the head, giving a natural and realistic impression of Musashi's head structure. ● Musashi's jaw can be identified as slightly elongated downwards, with a visible protrusion on the section between the lower lip and the upper chin. The shape of the jaw resembles the curved letter "L", and the back edge of the ramus points towards the front of the ear. In the drawing of Musashi (figure 4), this firm jaw shape adds a masculine feel to the character.
Forehead	 Picture of Musashi's Forehead Source: Inoue (2010)	 Male Forehead Picture Source: Faigin (1990)	● The forehead has a variety of shapes, both vertical and angular. However, male foreheads tend to be more angular than female foreheads (Faigin, 1990), and have a stronger protrusion on the eyebrows. Looking at Figure 6, Musashi has a forehead that is angled and follows the natural contours of the face with slightly prominent eyebrows. This shows that Musashi fits the characteristics of a man's forehead.

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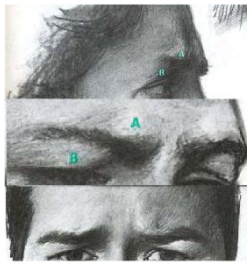
Eyebrows	 Picture of Musashi Eyebrows Source: Inoue (2010)	 Image of Sad Eyebrow Shape Source: Faigin (1990)	• The eyebrows in the picture above are depicted in a straight position that tends to drop slightly. This slightly downward eyebrow position illustrates a reaction or response to something that is being thought or felt. • The lowered eyebrows give an indication of an expression of sadness or regret, which corresponds to the emotions experienced by the Musashi. • Feigin (1990) states that the eyebrows are the key to sadness, and even a slight movement of the eyebrows is enough to express the emotion. In this case, Musashi's eyebrows are slightly bent downward, creating the impression of a heavy feeling. • According to Feigin (1990), sadness requires only a small movement of the eyebrows to be visible, accompanied by a wrinkle of the forehead or a change in the eyes. A slightly lowered eyebrow leads to the emotion of deep sadness and restraint (Faigin, 1990), an expression that is very much attached to the situation experienced by Musashi.
Eye	 Musashi Eye Drawing Source: Inoue (2010)	 Pictures of bulging eyes and eye gaze direction Source: Faigin (1990)	• According to Feigin (1990), wide-open eyes, accompanied by slightly raised eyebrows, can exude emotions of fear or emotional distress, which is evident in Musashi's expression. • Musashi's downward gaze reinforces the sense of introspection and regret, as if he is reflecting on his past actions. • The visualization of tears in Musashi's eyes adds an emotional dimension, giving a deeper impression of sadness than facial expressions without tears (Ito et al., 2019). • The pupils are depicted as oval and narrow, following the direction of the gaze forward and the crease line of the upper eyelid adds details of realism creating visual depth that further strengthens the sadness of the character. • The combination of wide-open eyes, lowered eyebrows, and visualization of tears suggests intense sadness and inner conflict, in line with Faigin's theory on the role of the eyes in expressing emotions. • This image showcases Inoue's skill in designing strong eye expressions, where details such as the pupils, lid creases, and gaze direction work together to enrich the emotional narrative of the panel.

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Table 3: Miyamoto Musashi *Vagabond Volume* 32 *Gesture* Analysis

Description	***Vagabond Volume* 32**	**Explanation**
Gesture	 Miyamoto Musashi *Gesture* Image *Volume* 32 Source: Inoue (2010)	● the wide-open eye movements, the lowered eyebrows, and the visualization of the flow of tears show sadness ● An obvious gesture is Musashi's left hand covering his nose and mouth, reflecting a feeling of helplessness. ● The two hands pressing on the face visualize Musashi's expression of trying to hold back or hide the intensity of emotion. ● Head bowing is often associated with a response to realization of something, which can represent sadness, regret, or feelings of shame. The combination of the hand gesture and the bowed head reinforces the visual narrative, giving Musashi's character a strong emotional portrayal.

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The conclusion of the analysis of the three tables in the sub-results is as follows.

As a result of Table 1, the analysis of drawing elements and shading techniques using Lintang Widyokusumo's theory, it is found that the panel in volume 32, based on its building blocks, shows Musashi in an emotional moment of holding back tears, without text or word balloons, with a white background that emphasizes the impression of solitude and inner conflict. The visuals focus on Musashi's expressions and gestures through realistic lighting, detailed depictions of shirt folds and facial contours, as well as balanced panel composition and bust-up viewpoints to reinforce the emotional feel of the scene. Takehiko Inoue uses traditional drawing techniques with a black ink brush, relying on hatching and cross-hatching to create gradations, shadows, and light-dark contrasts that reinforce the dramatic impression and emotional atmosphere in the panel.

As a result of Table 2, analyzing character expressions using Gary Faigin's *Facial Expression* theory, it was found that the depiction of Miyamoto Musashi's facial expressions in *Vagabond* volume 32 visually reflects deep emotions of regret, sadness, and self-introspection through details of eyebrows, eyes, tears, forehead contours, and body gestures that are in accordance with Gary Faigin's facial expression theory. Shading techniques, panel composition, and blank backgrounds reinforce the emotional intensity, confirming that visual design plays an important role in building character depth and conveying emotional complexity in manga. The *hatching* and *cross-hatching* techniques, panel composition, and use of blank backgrounds further emphasize the intensity of expressions and gestures. These findings show that Gary Faigin's theory is relevant in understanding how facial elements and body gestures can be used to convey character emotions in visual works. Facial expression analysis plays a significant role in building character depth and strengthening emotional communication in *Vagabond manga*.
Table 3, *Gesture* Analysis using Nicolaides' theory, found that Musashi's gestures-hands covering his face, head bowed, and intense emotional expression-do not only represent his physical form or facial condition, but reflect *what* the character *is doing* and *feeling in* that

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moment. In the context of the theory of gesture as dynamic movement in space, the image creator sensed Musashi's emotional essence and expressed it through motion that was not static. This gesture is not just a visualization of form, but a representation of emotional action: holding back tears, hiding vulnerability, and facing the awareness of regret. As such, Musashi's gestures become a powerful expressive medium-bringing emotions to life through movement that the image-maker feels and absorbs rather than merely displays.

CONCLUSION

From the three results of the analysis based on the theories of Lintang Widyokusumo, Gary Faigin, and Kimon Nicolaides, it is found that the panels in *Vagabond* volume 32 visually successfully represent the complexity of Musashi's emotions through the integration of image elements, facial expressions, and body gestures.

Drawing Elements and Shading Techniques (Lintang Widyokusumo):

The panels are laid out with a balanced composition, white background, and realistic lighting to bring out Musashi's emotions. *Hatching* and *cross-hatching* shading techniques with black ink are used to create gradations, shadows, and contrasts, which reinforce the dramatic and visceral impression.

Facial Expression (Gary Faigin):

Musashi's expression-including lowered eyebrows, downward-looking open eyes, and tears-represents sadness, regret, and self-introspection. These facial elements show how visual design can effectively build character depth and convey strong emotions.

Body Gestures (Kimon Nicolaides):

Musashi's gestures-such as hands covering his face and head bowing-are not just visual forms, but dynamic representations of emotional actions. The artist senses and captures the essence of Musashi's inner movements as a form of emotional communication that is alive and not static.

Key Findings:

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This panel demonstrates that a combination of visual techniques, facial expressions, and body gestures can effectively convey a character's inner state. With complementary theoretical approaches, it was found that the visual design in the *Vagabond* manga not only depicts form, but also successfully brings feelings to life-expressing sadness, regret, and human vulnerability through emotional and expressive visuals.

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